

Now that we have a better understanding of the reasons staff nurses give for staying with the same employer, we will take a look at what employers think is effective when it comes to retaining staff nurses.

### Staff Nurse Retention: Views of Employers

In the summer of 2000, the NC Center for Nursing surveyed each of the 125 hospital facilities and/or hospital systems, and a random sample of 372 long term care facilities located in North Carolina. One hundred hospital facilities / systems returned completed surveys for a response rate of 80%, and 179 long term care facilities returned completed surveys for a response rate of 48%. In hospitals, Vice-Presidents of Nursing and/or Patient Services were asked to describe their most effective programs for retaining established staff RNs. Long term care facilities were asked to describe their most effective program for reducing turnover among RNs and LPNs. On each item, respondents were allowed to provide more than one response. Total responses were analyzed and coded based upon similar themes. A second reviewer then analyzed and provided feedback concerning the thematic codes and total responses were tallied.

#### *Hospital Strategies for Retaining Experienced RN Staff Nurses*

When North Carolina hospitals were asked to share strategies for retaining established staff RNs, 87 hospitals reported a total of 170 strategies (see Table 7). Offering competitive wages was the most frequent response given by hospitals. Flexible scheduling (which included self-scheduling, lower

**Table 7. Experienced RN retention strategies reported by hospitals**

Strategies	N	%
Competitive wages, strong pay scale	41	24.1%
Flexible scheduling, control over shifts	27	15.9%
Opportunity for decision making participation and input	25	14.7%
Comprehensive, flexible benefits	20	11.8%
Continuing education, professional practice development opportunities	18	10.6%
Positive collegial environment	10	5.9%
Recognition programs	9	5.3%
Bonus programs	8	4.7%
Adequate staffing	6	3.5%
Opportunity to work in a variety of settings	3	1.8%
Preceptorships, mentoring	2	1.2%
Make human resources available at night	1	0.1%
Total Responses	170	99.6%

Note. The percentages in this table are based on the total number of strategies reported by hospitals, rather than the total number of hospitals that responded to this question. This differs from Table 2 and Table 3 of this report, in which the percentages are based on the total number of staff nurses in the analysis group.